ABSTRACT

A definition module generates configuration instructions used to build one or more machines. The definition module generates the configuration instructions by drawing from a generic library of configuration objects having a variety of attributes and parameters associated therewith. A pre-established template defines how the information provided in the library is organized to build groups of machines. An inheritance mechanism is provided for automatically resolving unspecified parameter values by searching through a hierarchy of objects to determine the unspecified values. The definition module includes a graphical user interface having a tree display section for displaying a hierarchical tree of objects associated with the configuration instructions, a parameter display section for displaying parameters associated with the objects in the tree display section, and a properties display section for displaying properties associated with objects in the tree display section or the parameters in the parameter display section. The configuration instructions can be easily consolidated into packages and transferred from one site to another, or downloaded from a central site.